

1 EQUAL ACCESS TO CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE

2 REPORTS

3 SEC. 124. (a) DEFINITIONS.—

(1) CRS PRODUCT.—In this section, the term “CRS product” means any final work product of CRS in any format.

7 (2) CRS REPORT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—In this section, the term “CRS Report” means any written CRS product, including an update to a previous written CRS product, consisting of—

12 (i) a Congressional Research Service
13 Report;

(ii) a Congressional Research Service
Authorization of Appropriations Product
and Appropriations Product; or

(iii) subject to subparagraph (B)(iii),
any other written CRS product containing
CRS research or CRS analysis which is
available for general congressional access
on the CRS Congressional Intranet.

(B) EXCLUSIONS.—The term “CRS Report” does not include—

1 (i) any CRS product that is deter-
2 mined by the CRS Director to be a custom
3 product or service because it was prepared
4 in direct response to a request for custom
5 analysis or research and is not available
6 for general congressional access on the
7 CRS Congressional Intranet;

8 (ii) any Congressional Research Serv-
9 ice Report or any Congressional Research
10 Service Authorization of Appropriations
11 Product and Appropriations Product re-
12 ported or produced before the effective
13 date of this Act which, as of such effective
14 date, is not available for general congres-
15 sional access on the CRS Congressional
16 Intranet; or

17 (iii) a written CRS product that has
18 been made available by CRS for publica-
19 tion on a public website maintained by the
20 GPO Director (other than the Website) or
21 the Library of Congress.

22 (3) OTHER DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

23 (A) the term “CRS” means the Congres-
24 sional Research Service;

1 (B) the term “CRS Congressional
2 Intranet” means any of the websites maintained
3 by CRS for the purpose of providing to Mem-
4 bers and employees of Congress access to infor-
5 mation from CRS;

6 (C) the term “CRS Director” means the
7 Director of CRS;

8 (D) the term “GPO Director” means the
9 Director of the Government Publishing Office;

10 (E) the term “Member of Congress” in-
11 cludes a Delegate or Resident Commissioner to
12 Congress; and

13 (F) the term “Website” means the website
14 established and maintained under subsection
15 (b).

16 (b) AVAILABILITY OF CRS REPORTS THROUGH GPO
17 WEBSITE.—

18 (1) WEBSITE.—

19 (A) ESTABLISHMENT AND MAINTENANCE.—The GPO Director, in consultation
20 with the CRS Director, shall establish and
21 maintain a public website containing CRS Re-
22 ports and an index of all CRS Reports con-
23 tained on the website, in accordance with this
24 subsection.
25

1 (B) FORMAT.—On the Website, CRS Re-
2 ports shall be searchable, sortable, and
3 downloadable, including downloadable in bulk.

4 (C) FREE ACCESS.—Notwithstanding sec-
5 tion 4102 of title 44, United States Code, the
6 GPO Director may not charge a fee for access
7 to the Website.

8 (2) UPDATES; DISCLAIMER.—The GPO Direc-
9 tor, in consultation with the CRS Director, shall en-
10 sure that the Website—

11 (A) is updated contemporaneously, auto-
12 matically, and electronically to include each new
13 or updated CRS Report released on or after the
14 effective date of this section;

15 (B) shows the status of each CRS Report
16 as new, updated, or withdrawn; and

17 (C) displays the following statement in ref-
18 erence to the CRS Reports included on the
19 Website: “These documents were prepared by
20 the Congressional Research Service (CRS).
21 CRS serves as nonpartisan shared staff to con-
22 gressional committees and Members of Con-
23 gress. It operates solely at the behest of and
24 under the direction of Congress. Information in
25 a CRS Report should not be relied upon for

1 purposes other than public understanding of in-
2 formation that has been provided by CRS to
3 Members of Congress in connection with CRS's
4 institutional role. CRS Reports, as a work of
5 the United States Government, are not subject
6 to copyright protection in the United States.
7 Any CRS Report may be reproduced and dis-
8 tributed in its entirety without permission from
9 CRS. However, as a CRS Report may include
10 copyrighted images or material from a third
11 party, you may need to obtain the permission of
12 the copyright holder if you wish to copy or oth-
13 erwise use copyrighted material.”.

14 (3) FURNISHING OF NECESSARY INFORMATION
15 AND TECHNOLOGY.—The CRS Director shall consult
16 with and provide assistance to the GPO Director to
17 ensure—

18 (A) that the GPO Director is provided
19 with all of the information necessary to carry
20 out this section, including all of the information
21 described in clauses (i) through (v) of sub-
22 section (c)(1)(A), in such format and manner
23 as the GPO Director considers appropriate; and

24 (B) that CRS makes available and imple-
25 ments such technology as may be necessary to

1 facilitate the contemporaneous, automatic, and
2 electronic provision of CRS Reports to the GPO
3 Director as required under this section.

4 (4) NONEXCLUSIVITY.—The GPO Director may
5 publish other information on the Website.

6 (5) ADDITIONAL TECHNIQUES.—The GPO Di-
7 rector and the CRS Director may use additional
8 techniques to make CRS Reports available to the
9 public, if such techniques are consistent with this
10 section and any other applicable laws.

11 (6) ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.—The CRS Di-
12 rector is encouraged to make additional CRS prod-
13 ucts that are not custom products or services avail-
14 able to the GPO Director for publication on the
15 Website, and the GPO Director is encouraged to
16 publish such CRS products on the Website.

17 (7) EXPANSION OF CONTENTS OF ANNUAL RE-
18 PORT TO CONGRESS TO INCLUDE INFORMATION ON
19 EFFORTS TO MAKE ADDITIONAL PRODUCTS AVAIL-
20 ABLE ON WEBSITE.—Section 203(i) of the Legisla-
21 tive Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 166(i)) is
22 amended by striking the period at the end and in-
23 serting the following: “, and shall include in the re-
24 port a description of the efforts made by the Direc-
25 tor to make additional Congressional Research Serv-

1 ice products that are not custom products or services
2 available to the Director of the Government Pub-
3 lishing Office for publication on the website estab-
4 lished and maintained under section 124 of the Leg-
5 islative Branch Appropriations Act, 2018.”.

6 (c) WEBSITE CONTENTS.—

7 (1) SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR REPORTS
8 POSTED ON WEBSITE.—

9 (A) RESPONSIBILITIES OF GPO DIREC-
10 TOR.—With respect to each CRS Report in-
11 cluded on the Website, the GPO Director shall
12 include—

13 (i) the name and identification num-
14 ber of the CRS Report;

15 (ii) an indication as to whether the
16 CRS Report is new, updated, or with-
17 drawn;

18 (iii) the date of release of the CRS
19 Report;

20 (iv) the division or divisions of CRS
21 that were responsible for the production of
22 the CRS Report; and

23 (v) any other information the GPO
24 Director, in consultation with the CRS Di-
25 rector, considers appropriate.

1 (B) RESPONSIBILITIES OF CRS DIREC-
2 TOR.—With respect to each CRS Report in-
3 cluded on the Website, the CRS Director shall,
4 prior to transmitting the Report to the GPO
5 Director—

6 (i) at the discretion of the CRS Direc-
7 tor, remove the name of and any contact
8 information for any employee of CRS; and

9 (ii) include in the CRS Report the fol-
10 lowing written statement: “This document
11 was prepared by the Congressional Re-
12 search Service (CRS). CRS serves as non-
13 partisan shared staff to congressional com-
14 mittees and Members of Congress. It oper-
15 ates solely at the behest of and under the
16 direction of Congress. Information in a
17 CRS Report should not be relied upon for
18 purposes other than public understanding
19 of information that has been provided by
20 CRS to Members of Congress in connec-
21 tion with CRS’s institutional role. CRS Re-
22 ports, as a work of the United States Gov-
23 ernment, are not subject to copyright pro-
24 tection in the United States. Any CRS Re-
25 port may be reproduced and distributed in

1 its entirety without permission from CRS.
2 However, as this CRS Report may include
3 copyrighted images or material from a
4 third party, you may need to obtain the
5 permission of the copyright holder if you
6 wish to copy or otherwise use copyrighted
7 material.”.

8 (2) SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR INDEX ON
9 WEBSITE.—The GPO Director shall ensure that the
10 index of all CRS Reports published on the Website
11 is—

- 12 (A) comprehensive;
- 13 (B) contemporaneously updated;
- 14 (C) searchable;
- 15 (D) sortable;
- 16 (E) maintained in a human-readable for-
17 mat;
- 18 (F) maintained in a structured data for-
19 mat;
- 20 (G) downloadable; and
- 21 (H) inclusive of each item of information
22 described in paragraph (1)(A) with respect to
23 each CRS Report.

1 (d) CONFORMING AMENDMENT TO DUTIES OF
2 CRS.—Section 203(d) of the Legislative Reorganization
3 Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 166(d)) is amended—

4 (1) by striking “and” at the end of paragraph
5 (7);

6 (2) by striking the period at the end of para-
7 graph (8) and inserting “; and”; and

8 (3) by adding at the end the following new
9 paragraph:

10 “(9) to comply with the requirements of, and
11 provide information and technological assistance
12 consistent with, section 124 of the Legislative
13 Branch Appropriations Act, 2018.”.

14 (e) RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.—

15 (1) NO EFFECT ON SPEECH OR DEBATE
16 CLAUSE.—Nothing in this section may be construed
17 to diminish, qualify, condition, waive, or otherwise
18 affect the applicability of clause 1 of section 6 of ar-
19 ticle I of the Constitution of the United States (com-
20 monly known as the “Speech or Debate Clause”) or
21 any other privilege available to Congress or Mem-
22 bers, offices, or employees of Congress with respect
23 to any CRS Report made available online under this
24 section.

1 (2) CONFIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS.—Noth-
2 ing in this section may be construed to waive the re-
3 quirement that any confidential communication by
4 CRS to a Member, office, or committee of Congress
5 shall remain under the custody and control of Con-
6 gress and may be released only by Congress and its
7 Houses, Members, offices, and committees, in ac-
8 cordance with the rules and privileges of each House
9 and the requirements of this section.

10 (3) DISSEMINATION OF CRS PRODUCTS.—Noth-
11 ing in this section may be construed to limit or oth-
12 erwise affect the ability of a Member, office, or com-
13 mittee of Congress to disseminate CRS products on
14 a website of the Member, office, or committee or to
15 otherwise provide CRS products to the public, in-
16 cluding as part of constituent service activities.

17 (f) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

18 (1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in para-
19 graph (2), this section and the amendments made by
20 this section shall take effect 90 days after the date
21 on which the GPO Director submits the certification
22 described in paragraph (2)(B).

23 (2) PROVISION OF INFORMATION AND TECH-
24 NOLOGY.—

1 (A) CRS DEADLINE.—Not later than 90
2 days after the date of enactment of this Act,
3 the CRS Director shall provide the GPO Direc-
4 tor with the information and technology nec-
5 essary for the GPO Director to begin the initial
6 operation of the Website.

7 (B) CERTIFICATION.—Upon provision of
8 the information and technology described in
9 subparagraph (A), the GPO Director shall sub-
10 mit to Congress a certification that the CRS
11 Director has provided the information and tech-
12 nology necessary for the GPO Director to begin
13 the initial operation of the Website.